

## Quarantining While Queer Video Companion

Handling unaccepting, hostile, or invalidating family members and environments is difficult. In this video we talk about choices and strategies you can apply to take care of yourself while managing quarantine.

- The first point is **Empowerment**- doing what you can to preserve your agency, identity, and well-being during times you are not able to be your full and authentic self
  - Instead of thinking of or speaking of being “in the closet” or “out of the closet”, think instead of reframing your outness as being managed by the ongoing and intentional choices of **identity concealment** (choosing not to tell people about your identity) and **identity disclosure** (choosing to tell people about your identity)
  - Intentional choices made to conceal or disclose identity are adaptive survival strategies based on how you perceive difficult situations; it is purposeful, temporary, involves action, and places you in control of your information
  - There are benefits and drawbacks to both concealing your identity and to disclosing it; you decide to make these choices based on these benefits and drawbacks every day, based on changing information and your perception of what is best for you
  - While you can’t choose to be in the situation or choose others’ actions, beliefs, or decisions, you have many choices around it, which may include:
    - What pieces of your personal information and identity to disclose, to what extent, when, to whom, etc.;
    - If you’re going to correct/educate others about your identity *because you decide it’s important enough* to you, or decide not to *because it is the most adaptive thing* for you to do;
    - Who you spend time with;
    - What activities you participate in;
    - If and with whom you will discuss partners/relationships
- The second point is **Self Compassion**- not taking onto yourself the ways others around you may have *chosen* to think about you, speak to you, or treat you
  - When family members or others *decide to withhold* love, affection, acceptance, or safety from you, that *does not* mean or prove that you are not worth those things
  - You may not be able to avoid the hurt of non-acceptance, but you can *refuse to take in and believe that hurt*
  - It is not your job to change or hide yourself to please others or earn their acceptance; *you may choose* to, situationally, as a means of survival, but you owe it to no one
  - Pay attention to your self-talk and advocate for yourself fiercely- if you are having hurtful thoughts about yourself, are they fair, rational, or useful? Is it truly your voice, or someone else’s? Would you say the same thing to your best friend? Surely you deserve to give yourself the same kindness and fairness as you would give your best friend
- The third point is to **Strategize**- Managing identity concealment and disclosure is a way to handle a stressful situation in order to get the best outcome, to increase your well-being, and to decrease your distress.
  - Identify safe and neutral people in your space, as well as unsafe ones

- Plan how you can safely increase time spent with safe people and decrease contact with unsafe ones (arranging school/work schedules strategically, knowing what other peoples' schedules are and planning around them, knowing when/how/where it is safe and practical for you to be alone and/or away from unsafe people, etc.)
  - Address physical and housing safety- if there is a concern of abuse or of being put out of your home, plan for resources (community resources, friends, family) you will access if you need to; we have included some resources here and in the video
  - Draw boundaries and give yourself breaks and time alone, where and when you can; think of excuses you can use, strategic ways of scheduling (for example, if you're employed, ask for shifts at times that reduce contact with unsafe people)
  - Identify your available support, within and outside of your space, that you can utilize as needed (and access them when you need to, even if it's just a quick text message)
    - Friends, partners, online friends/support/resources, affirming websites/music/media
  - There are other strategies you may already use to manage your choices around identity concealment and disclosure in conversation with others, like denial, avoidance of identity-related topics, distraction from unsafe topics, vagueness, strategic pronoun usage
    - Use of these strategies is not dishonest, disloyal, or mean-spirited- *you did not choose to be placed in a survival situation, and you are allowed to see to your safety* if people close to you choose not to
  - Think about keeping some safe pieces of your identity, such as subtle ways of presenting your gender or identity- clothing, color choices, symbols or flags, meaningful and positive music, shows, or media. There can be many such things tied to your identity that others who are not LGBTQ+ folks won't necessarily recognize and can maintain your connection to your true self
  - Give yourself credit for the things you do for yourself and the hard choices you make, even if they're only small things
- The fourth point is to **Reconnect and Heal**- not only to care for yourself during this time, but to plan and look forward to when this will end and you can return to more positive spaces, people, and activities.
    - Reconnect with people, places, partners, etc. who accept and care about you
    - Reestablish parts of your presentation or identity that you have chosen to temporarily conceal
    - Review your successes and self-care choices, and acknowledge that you made it through a difficult time even if it hurt and didn't go as well as you would have liked
  - Campus and Local Resources
    - UNLV CAPS- (702) 895-3627 (Ask about our LGBTQ+ Support Group if interested)
    - Student Diversity and Social Justice- (702) 895-5740
    - Jean Nidetch Women's Center (welcomes people of all identities)- (702) 895-4475
    - The Center- <https://thecenterlv.org>
    - PFLAG Las Vegas- <https://pflag.org/chapter/pflag-las-vegas>
  - National Resources
    - The Trevor Project- <https://www.thetrevorproject.org>
    - PFLAG- [HTTPS://pflag.org](https://pflag.org)

- Relaxation/Stress Management Resources
  - Mindfulness meditation scripts- <http://www.mindfulness-solution.com/DownloadMeditations.html>
  - Progressive muscle relaxation script- <http://mainlinecounselingpartners.com/progressive-muscle-relaxation/>
  - Mindfulness apps- Headspace, Happify, Stop Breathe & Think, 50 Minute Meditations
  - Mindful breathing- [www.xhalr.com](http://www.xhalr.com)